

Digital Strategy: 2018 to 2020

1. Purpose

1.1.

This strategy provides a framework for Orkney Islands Council to better help people meet their needs as they access the Council's services through digital channels. The strategy is framed to recognise the changing expectations of people over time as digital technology and opportunities advance.

1.2.

This strategy supports and contributes to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Council Plan strategic priorities of Connected Communities, Caring Communities, Thriving Communities and Quality of Life.

1.3.

The strategy supports and contributes to improved outcomes for communities as outlined in the Local Outcomes Improvement Plan priority of Strong Communities and Living Well.

1.4.

This Digital Strategy is led by the Senior Management Team, in the recognition that services lead innovation, supported by technological solutions provided either nationally or locally through the Council's IT Strategy.

1.5.

We will take a Digital First approach: this reflects the need to offer services to the public via a number of means whilst allowing us to reduce costs. A Digital First approach will not mean that services can only be accessed digitally. The Council remains committed to ensuring that its services are accessible to all residents.

1.6.

Over time, face-to-face and telephone contact will reduce naturally and this will lower the overall cost of service delivery by the Council. This will be achieved through the introduction of new "digital channels" including more online forms.

1.7.

Digital First will improve the experience of users, especially those saying they want ways to engage digitally with the Council. It will enable Council services to be accessed from anywhere (via the internet), when required, and in the way our customers want.

1.8.

Digital First will allow information to be collected in a digital format providing useful business information to support the planning of services and their delivery.

1.9.

When considering whether a service or function should be digitised, there will need to be a robust business case. This will be scrutinised carefully to make sure that any cost reductions are achievable.

1.10.

Digital First will be achieved by:

- Engaging with people (including Orkney residents, visitors and our staff) to understand how services can be preserved and sustained, made more efficient and/or improved.
- Redesigning our services to meet these people's needs, as they are now, and as they might change over time.
- Using technology to reduce the cost of people's access to services, and to reduce the costs to the Council of providing them.
- Working together with our community planning partners and national partners such as the Scottish and UK Governments to adopt successful innovation introduced by other organisations.
- Continuing to make appropriate use of social media where that is how people want to communicate with us.
- Ensuring that our policies appropriately reflect the importance of Digital First to improve the way we deliver services, and communicate with people.

2. Outcomes - What Success Will Look Like

2.1. Customer Focus

2.1.1.

Services will be well designed, offered over a number of different channels and available on demand.

2.1.2.

Guidance and support will be available for customers.

2.1.3.

Digital services will be adapted to meet the needs of customers based on customer feedback.

2.1.4.

Digital services will become, over time, the preferred way of working with the Council for the majority of our customers.

2.2. Digital Workforce

2.2.1.

Leaders within the Council will understand the benefits of digital services and actively seek the introduction of such services, supporting the delivery of new or re-designed services.

2.2.2.

The working environment for our elected members and staff will develop and change, allowing them to focus on the actual delivery of services to customers as opposed to the process of delivery.

2.3. Infrastructure and Systems

2.3.1.

Systems will be reliable, safe, secure and usable when and where needed.

2.3.2.

A choice of channels will be available for customers to access services through.

2.3.3.

Over time, all internal data and systems will be digital wherever appropriate.

2.3.4.

Systems will be resilient. We will ensure that personal information is always kept secure and is as accurate as possible.

2.3.5.

Systems and processes will be efficient. We will reduce the costs per transaction across all our services.

3. How Will We Do It

3.1. Customer Focus

We will implement a Customer Services Platform (CSP):

- To help us improve the effectiveness and efficiency of how we interact with our customers.
- To be a single point of contact for all customer requests.
- To enable customers to access Council services online.
- To allow the joining up of services.

3.2. Digital Workforce

3.2.1.

We will change our business practices and make sure that adequate training is provided to all relevant staff.

3.2.2.

These new practices will improve the effectiveness and efficiency of how we work, and also make appropriate cost savings over the medium term.

3.3. Infrastructure and Systems

3.3.1.

We will review our IT and communications infrastructure.

3.3.2.

We will improve the reliability and usability of core and critical systems, such as data storage and processing, network links within and between Council sites, email and printing.

3.3.3.

We will continue to develop systems that support our key business processes.

4. Governance and Reporting

4.1.

Following approval by the Council, this strategy will be reviewed annually by the Asset Management Sub-committee, to ensure that it continues to be aligned to other Council objectives and priorities.

4.2.

The Executive Director of Corporate Services will ensure that the Senior Management Team, in the form of the Information Services Programme Board, considers reviews of this strategy in conjunction with any review of the Council's IT Strategy.

4.3.

The Information Services Programme Board will ensure that suitable management arrangements are in place to implement this strategy.

4.4.

The Executive Director for Corporate Services will draw up a delivery plan, to implement this strategy. The delivery plan will be co-ordinated with the work of the Modernising IT Change Review, and will be updated as necessary (in consultation with the Information Services Programme Board), with progress against the plan reported to the Information Services Programme Board every three months. The delivery plan will contain initiatives and projects, some of which will be managed within the Change Programme.